8:Arensberg E-5 (1932-1934) 1937
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grateful. It is a land of hard realities. This Ireland is subject to hot flashes of anger and dispute which throw into relief deep-lying hatreds and fierce loyalties. We all know something of the Land War and Sinn Fein and the bitter internecine strife of the Trouble. If we know anything of Ireland's history we see these rough upheavals of a tranquil scene as great punctuation marks upon a red page of struggle lasting seven hundred years. This is the Ireland of bitter economic fate and political unrest. Much of this can be laid at England's door, but not all. The Ireland of the Irish is no more free of internal strife than any other land.

Most of us recognize a fourth Ireland as well, especially those who are Catholics. It is the Ireland of the Faith, the Island of Saints and Scholars. It is the land of the devout, where word and deed breathe a religious fervour which most of us have forgotten. This is the land of holy wells and pilgrimages and roadside shrines. Well-filled churches rise above every hamlet now and the black-frocked priest is a familiar friendly figure. To many of us, perhaps a paradox lies here. Fierce love of political liberty goes hand in hand with a deep devotion to the most authoritarian of Christian creeds.

Nor is this the only paradox in a land of surprises where even the sun and sky are inconsistent. The beauty of the Irish landscape lies in the never-ending change of colour. A momentary break of sun

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a symbolic order overlying the values of social life and clothing them in emotional terms in much the same way as do unofficial dogmas and unofficial, non-logical cosmologies among all peoples, not excepting those of our own urban civilization of today. In that, they respond to recognizable sociological and psychological necessities. In its own way, Yankee New England is as fertile of such non-logical beliefs as is rural Ireland. Rural Ireland is different only in that she has preserved an older and more ancient terminology in which to build her particular symbolism. She has her own genius in the matter which expresses the age-long continuities of her culture.

I think you will perhaps understand me better if I go on to sketch out the symbolism which the 'pisherogues' contain.

First, one must notice that the Irish countryman is a very devout man. His life is ordered in his adherence to his religion. Much of his habit of mind and his view of the world responds to his Faith. He is a devout and practising Catholic. But he is also devout in another direction too, very often. Just as there is room in his mind and heart for patriotic fervour along with religious zeal, so is there room for fairy belief. Sometimes, of course, these devotions may conflict; but ordinarily they need not. They can intermesh and support one another.

Thus in his daily life, one finds the countryman

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cents and adults. It is through these agencies that Jansenism, masochism, the Oedipus complex, male solidarity, and other inextricably linked factors shape the severe sexual repression which gives rise to the cultural manifestations discussed in the last section of the chapter.

Priests of Jansenist persuasion have had subtle means of repressing the sexual instincts of the islanders in addition to the more extreme methods of controlling behavior—"clerical social control," such as employing informers, allocating indulgences, and refusing the sacraments to, and placing curses on, miscreants. Through sermons and informal classroom talks, the pulpit and the national school have served as effective vehicles of church discipline. The talks are especially telling, since they take advantage of the personality malleability of the formative years. The adult Irish person is rare who, although anticlerical, and even agnostic or atheistic, can transcend these early enculturative experiences, particularly in times of social crisis or personality disorganization. Erring islanders have often been sought out by priests and talked to privately after their ways have become known through gossip, informers, or the confessional. Some curates have suppressed courting, dancing, visiting, and other behavior either directly or "indirectly" (widely interpreted in Ireland) sexual in nature by physical action: that is, roaming the trails and fields at night seeking out young lovers and halting dancing by their threatening presence. This outward form of intrusion into island affairs is resented by most folk, as is the inward intrusion through priestly remonstrances; they question the right of the young, virginal, inexperienced, and sexually unknowledgeable curates to give advice in this sphere.

Church influence is also exerted through missions which visit Inis Beag every three to five years. On these occasions, two Redemptorist priests (occasionally Franciscans, Dominicans, or Passionists) spend a week on the island, where they conduct mass each morning and deliver long sermons in the chapel every afternoon or early evening. Everyone, even old people and mothers with young infants, is urged to attend to receive the "blessings of the mission." To some, this means shortening the time in purgatory for themselves or a deceased relative (an indulgence used to enforce church discipline). To others, absence carries with it the penalty of damnation, just as viewing an eel or small fish in the sacred well, appropriated from the Druids, promises salvation in an equally magical fashion. A mission usually has a theme, the variations of which are explored with high emotion and eloquence by the visiting clerics in

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their exhortations. The most common theme is "controlling one's passions," but two others have often been addressed in the missionizing effort: abstaining from intoxicating drink and maintaining the faith as an emigrant. Collections are made by children to support the endeavor, and a list of contributors and their respective donations is displayed publicly. This technique of social control is also used by the curate at the several yearly offerings. A mission creates an emotionally charged atmosphere on the island, which continues for weeks after the departure of the clerics.

The seeds of repression are planted early in childhood by parents and kin through instruction supplemented by rewards and punishments, conscious imitation, and unconscious internalization. Although mothers bestow considerable affection and attention on their offspring, especially on their sons, physical love as manifested in intimate handling and kissing is rare in Inis Beag. Even breast feeding is uncommon because of its sexual connotation, and verbal affection comes to replace contact affection by late infancy. Any form of direct or indirect sexual expression—such as masturbation, mutual exploration of bodies, use of either standard or slang words relating to sex, and open urination and defecation—is severely punished by word or deed. Care is taken to cover the bodies of infants in the presence of siblings and outsiders, and sex is never discussed before children. Several times my wife inadvertently inquired as to whether particular women were pregnant, using that word before youths, only to be "hushed" or to have the conversation postponed until the young people could be herded outside. The adults were so embarrassed by the term that they found it difficult to communicate with her after the children had departed. She once aroused stupefaction among men on the strand when she attempted unsuccessfully to identify the gender of a bullock about to be shipped off.

It is in the home that the separation of sexes, so characteristic of Inis Beag life, is inaugurated among siblings in early childhood. Boys and girls in the family remain apart not only when interacting with the parent of the same sex at work, but when playing in and near the cottage and traveling to and from school. Parents and their older offspring read popular religious journals, found in most homes, many of the articles in which deal with sexual morality of the Irish Catholic variety.

One sociologist (Berger 1963: 66–92) classifies social control methods as those which involve physical violence or its threat (e.g., political and legal sanctions), those which result in economic pressures (e.g., occupation and market place relations), and, finally, those which